

REMARKS

The Examiner's Action mailed on October 10, 2007, has been received and its contents carefully considered.

In this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 3, and cancelled claims 2 and 11-20 without prejudice. Claim 1 is the sole independent claim, and claims 1 and 3-10 remain pending in the application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Applicants wish to express appreciation to the Examiner for indicating that claims 2 and 3, although objected to for dependence from a rejected bas claim, contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 2, and is therefore allowable, together with claims 3-10 that depend therefrom.

Claims 1 and 4-9 were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as anticipated by *Shimada et al.* (US 2003/0035634 A1), and claims 10 as obvious over *Shimada et al.* in view of *De Donno et al.* (US 2002/0015560 A1). These rejections are respectfully moot in light of the amendments to the claims.

It is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Such action and the passing of this case to issue are requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

Should any fee be required, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 18-0002, and advise us accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,



December 17, 2007
Date

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AMENDMENT

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